

NOTE # 1 page 8

All cars of the period were built quite high so one had to climb in. Part of the climbing process utilized a Running Board. The Running Board had several uses, 1) an aid in entering the vehicle, 2) a place to attach a luggage rack and 3) a shield from the dust and dirt, 4) to support those passengers beyond the normal seating capacity of the car. The luggage rack would clamp onto the Running Board and was scissor type expandable.

NOTE # 2 page 11

*Flood*

On St. Patrick's Day in 1936 there was again a serious <sup>Flood</sup> in the entire region including Johnstown. Early in the morning there was no particular flood alarm. My sister Evelyn and her husband Jim went to Johnstown to a movie. In the meantime the various rivers feeding the Conemaugh river which flows through downtown Johnstown, were being swollen by heavy rains and melting snow. When the show was over they could'nt get out of the theater due to high water in the streets.

Jim and Evelyn had just bought a new 1936 Chrysler, 4 door sedan, 8 cylinder, big and beautiful. When the waters receded to some degree they were rescued but could'nt find their car. After a couple of days of searching, they found the car rolled into a ball and plastered against the stadium wall along with many other cars and trucks. Obviously the flood waters rolled their car down main street, all across town.

However, in Blough we were watching the waters in Stoney Creek River rising by the minute. Other than getting our feet wet the only real damage recorded was to the Pugh family house.. The normally placid trickle of a stream that came down the mountain, through the Pugh property, on this day became a raging maniac. One could stand nearby and hear the water rolling the rocks along the bottom. One big bowling ball of a rock about three feet in diameter decided to not follow the crowd. It went straight ahead, up over the bank, through the yard, through the wall into the kitchen, through a second wall and came to rest in the middle of the living room,

BOXING:

Reference page 18 - ca. 1938/1939

So, your tired of hearing about the GREAT DEPRESSION, well, pray that you never have to live through one.

Anyway, we did what we could to earn a "buck" during this period. The Coal Mines worked 2 or 3 days a week if at all. To augment their income my Brother Bob and Uncle Sheldon Armagost took up Boxing. Each bout usually earned them about \$5.00. I was still not of legal age to do any boxing although I was six feet tall and weighed 175 pounds.

On one occasion Bob and Sheldon were scheduled to fight at Altoona, Pa. Bob said there would be room in the car and I could go along if I cared to. I said I'd go, at least it got me out of Blough for an evening.

At Altoona I went up into the stands and watched a couple bouts. Shortly after, Bob came up to me and said that one of the guys on the card did not show up, so the advertised card was short a match in my weight class. He said he wanted me to fill in, it would mean \$5.00 win or lose. I never fought before and only sparred a little with the guys. I was anxious and excited about doing this. The Doctor checked me out and took my blood pressure - his comment "I see you've done this before". He didn't know that I have normally low blood pressure. I thought Bob would split a gut laughing. Well, anyway, I won in the second round by a TKO. After this, in boxing circles, I was know as Kid Dynamite. (I prefer you forget this title). On second thought, why did I even mention it ? I got my \$5.00. What a marvelous feeling to money in my pocket.

Some weeks later, just fooling around with the guys in training, they talked me into a match with one of the trainees. Again I TKO'd, unofficially, of course.

As fate would have it, Max Brenner, the trainer at Hooversville talked me into a match at the Somerset County Fair at Meyersdale, Pa. As My match was being announced I was talking to my seconds in my corner. While talking, the bell rang and before I could turn around, my opponent was all over me like a second skin. At the end of the first round I was bleeding profusely-my nose was not broken, it was smashed. I thought I had at least slowed him down but when the bell rang, here he came and I was ready to a slight degree although he did work on my nose some more. In the middle of the second round I won by a TKO.

Time to do some thinking - I came to the conclusion that I didn't enjoy being pounded on nor did I enjoy hammering other people, this was not my nature. ----NO MORE-----...

I wore a crooked nose for years, in fact until Marcia, who was then working for a Doctor in Irwin, suggested I have him look at my nose. I did. The Doctor said it needed fixing. He fixed it at Jeannette Hospital.

NOTE # 3A page 24

When we arrived in Florida in September of 1940, we were not aware of just how fast one sun-burns in Florida. Most unlike Pennsylvania. During one of our swimming sessions at the lake, Ginnie acquired a very severe burn. She suffered long and hard with that one. One of the old Florida Cracker Matrons told us that the only reliable relief for such a sun-burn was condensed milk. We accepted the advice of those who are supposed to know. The condensed milk did not help the sun-burn but seriously added to the problem. The milk turned to a rubber cement type of substance which when peeled took the tender skin with it. She was a long time fully recovering from that ordeal.

NOTE # 4 page 25

Colonel Daniels was base Commander at Hendrix Field, a tall, slim, trim, handsome individual- ones idea of what a Colonel should look like. A discussion was had of details listed in the technical manuals about how to fly a B-17 Bomber. The manual very specifically states that one should never attempt to land a B-17 without the flaps being down. Well, Col Daniels took issue with the manual, it was a point he had to investigate. So, he took a new B-17 up to test the theory. The manual was right and the Colonel was very wrong. He touched down as near the beginning of the runway as he could. He literally destroyed both tires, both wheels and totaled the brakes and ran off the far end of the runway a full planes length. The airplane settled into the swamp right up to the wings. The ground crew worked many days to recover that airplane.

NOTE # 5 page 30

We arrived in Bizerte at a time when our military had just secured the area. As we came along side the dock to tie-up, we noted that there were hundreds or perhaps thousands of German prisoners on the dock awaiting transport by ship to prison camps. We were told not to venture afield for the Army was still mppping up some resistance and snipers.

A couple of days later we went over to the air field and in a hanger we saw several German fighter planes that they did not have time to haul out. They were in the hanger for repairs. But, we had to appreciate the marvelous workmanship of those planes.

NOTE # 6 page 32

On our way back to Bizerte from Salerno on a clear bright day the lookout spotted ships masts protruding over the horizon. A few moments more and the Skipper and the Quartermaster read that ships blinker light which was telling us to "stand too". Since we could identify it as one of our Destroyers we complied and stayed dead in the water awaiting it's arrival. From the time it came over the horizon it had it's five inch guns trained on us all the way. That Destroyer compassed us at about a two hundred foot radius and in the process as I stood on deck I was looking directly down the barrel of a five inch gun - most uncomfortable.

The Destroyer did'nt stop, he simply recognized us and went full speed back to his previous station.

NOTE # 7 page 33

We returned to Bizerte by way of Isle of Capri for an over night stay. We had gone from the docking area around to the opposite side of the Island to the anchorage area. Our guns had been cleaned, secured and covered. We were in swimming and otherwise having fun when we were astonished to see a German Messerschmitt fighter plane flying a tight circle around our anchorage area. We were sitting ducks but he made no effort to attack. We could see the pilot clearly - he just waved and flew on.

NOTE # 8 page 33

Our casual attire while on patrol was "any thing goes" , a tan shirt with blue jeans or blue shirt with tan slacks, T-shirt with tan or blue jeans or swimming trunks with a T-shirt or trunks only. Remember we were expendable! However, when in port on base we did dress regulation. So you can see why the Skipper ordered clean regulation dress with the Gen erals aboard.

NOTE # 9 page 35

Among our duties was to transport our spies into enemy territory, preferably on the darkest of nights. We would take them in as far as possible to drop them off then we would go out to sea sufficient distance to avoid detection. There we would "lay to" until rendezvous time then go in and pick them up. All too often one or two of them would not show up - not to be heard from again. Pulling away not knowing their circumstances was not easy and was perhaps the most disturbing of all.

NOTE # 10 page 35

The engineer I have referred to as Martin Coles should be corrected to Donald Cowles.

Don Cowles had been having trouble with the nerves in his hands. His battle station was to load the mid 20 mm gun. He had trouble holding the heavy ammunition magazine thus he was not proficient in loading the gun and even worse at night. The Skipper said he would be relieved of boat duty when we returned to Bizerte.

At the start of our feasko at Anzio, Cowles had been in crews quarters. When the shooting started he started up the ladder to top side. He had just gotten into the Chart House when the shell exploded within 3-4 feet of him. He took the full force of the explosion on his back and the shrapnel nearly cut him in half. He did not suffer long.

NOTE # 11 page 42

Virginia entered Deaconess Hospital, 16 deaconess Road, Boston, Mass. on January 6, 1945, at 2:00 P.M. The test was made January 8th, 1945 at 8:00 A.M.. The room cost was \$31.50 per day.

NOTE # 12 page 48

On the occasion of one of their visits to our house on Howell Street, Vern (Mr Rachel) and Rachel Miller in the course of conversation, reminded me that on a previous occasion I had said that my parents were in the Potato Chip business. They had a proposition for me.

He and Rachel owned land on one of the main intersections in Orlando, Florida. If I would take a Leave of Absence from Westinghouse, go to Florida and set up and operate a Potato Chip business, they would pay all expenses of moving and maintaining my family until the business became self-supporting.

I turned it down - no guts.

I had had so many flunky jobs up until then and now here I was established in a good job in a world renowned Company, I simply was not willing to jepordize that for what I then considered a questionable under-taking.

In retrospect, it was another lost opportunity.